

(a) whether Indian Computer is facing tough competition in export market;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to boost export of computers to European markets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main reasons are as follows:-

(i) The high cost due to low volume production and imported inputs.

(ii) The difficulties in marketing in a field which is dominated by well-known brand names.

(iii) The rapid changes in technology which the local industry is unable to keep pace with.

(c) A number of steps have been taken by Government to boost exports of computers especially to European markets. They include visits by the industry to tap new markets in Europe, participation by trade in fairs abroad and encouragement of foreign collaboration.

Development of Western Coastal Highways

5018. SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal for development of western coastal highways;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to seek assistance from the Asian

Development Bank for development of these roads; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). No, Sir. The demand for the road in question by the Maharashtra Govt. is basically for its inclusion in the National Highway network.

(c) Since the State Government of Maharashtra have not sent any proposal in this regard the Government is not contemplating at present to pose this State Road to the Asian Development Bank for funding.

Catamarans for Bombay-Panaji Route

5019. SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the companies which were given permission for acquisition of high speed catamarans, for plying on the Bombay-Panaji route, have since acquired the same;

(b) if so, the time by which the catamarans are likely to start plying on the route; and

(c) if not, the further steps taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). No, Sir. The Government have given permission to the following three shipping companies for acquisition of catamarans for Bombay-Panaji route:-

1) M/s. Binkam Shipping Private Limited.